

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Currently Amended) A pivoting shoulder strap for a backpack comprising:
a retaining plate positioned within the backpack;
a shoulder strap having a first end and a second end, the first end adapted to being
connected to the backpack; and
a pivoting mechanism positioned on the second end of the shoulder strap and adapted to
being mated to the retaining plate;

~~The pivoting shoulder strap of claim 1~~ wherein the pivoting mechanism comprises a base plate and a pivoting plate retained within the base plate.

3. The pivoting shoulder strap of claim 2 wherein the base plate comprises a clip and apertures positioned around the clip, the pivoting plate comprises an aperture adapted to fit within the clip of the base plate, a tongue portion having a tab with the tab for mating with the apertures in the base plate.

4. (Cancelled)
5. (Currently Amended) A pivoting shoulder strap for a backpack comprising:
a retaining plate positioned within the backpack;
a shoulder strap having a first end and a second end, the first end adapted to being
connected to the backpack; and
a pivoting mechanism positioned on the second end of the shoulder strap and adapted to
being mated to the retaining plate;

~~The pivoting shoulder strap of claim 1~~ wherein the pivoting mechanism comprises a base plate and a pivoting plate retained within the base plate the pivoting plate having a pair of screw

holes adapted for receiving screws, the retaining plate comprises a plate having a pair of screw holes each adapted for receiving a screw, with each screw being mated to the screw holes in the pivoting plate.

6. (Currently Amended) A pivoting shoulder strap for a backpack comprising:
a retaining plate positioned within the backpack;
a shoulder strap having a first end and a second end, the first end adapted to being
connected to the backpack; and
a pivoting mechanism positioned on the second end of the shoulder strap and adapted to
being mated to the retaining plate;

~~The pivoting shoulder strap of claim 1~~ wherein the pivoting mechanism comprises a base plate comprising a centrally positioned clip and apertures positioned around the clip, the apertures being positioned at predetermined intervals.

7. (Cancelled)
8. (Currently Amended) A ratcheting shoulder strap for a backpack comprising:
a retaining plate positioned within the backpack;
a shoulder strap having a first end and a second end, the first end adapted to being
connected to the backpack; and
a ratcheting mechanism positioned on the second end of the shoulder strap and adapted to
being mated to the retaining plate, the ratcheting mechanism for moving the shoulder strap
relative to the retaining plate in a predetermined degree of movement.

~~The ratcheting shoulder strap of claim 7~~ wherein the ratcheting mechanism comprises a base plate and a pivoting plate retained within the base plate.

9. The ratcheting shoulder strap of claim 8 wherein the base plate comprises a clip and apertures positioned around the clip, the pivoting plate comprises an aperture adapted to fit within the clip of the base plate, a tongue portion having a tab with the tab for mating with the apertures in the base plate.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) A ratcheting shoulder strap for a backpack comprising:

a retaining plate positioned within the backpack;

a shoulder strap having a first end and a second end, the first end adapted to being connected to the backpack; and

a ratcheting mechanism positioned on the second end of the shoulder strap and adapted to being mated to the retaining plate, the ratcheting mechanism for moving the shoulder strap relative to the retaining plate in a predetermined degree of movement.

~~The ratcheting shoulder strap of claim 7~~ wherein the ratcheting mechanism comprises a base plate comprising a centrally positioned clip and apertures positioned around the clip, the apertures being positioned at predetermined intervals.

13. (Currently Amended) A ratcheting shoulder strap for a backpack comprising:

a retaining plate positioned within the backpack;

a shoulder strap having a first end and a second end, the first end adapted to being connected to the backpack; and

a ratcheting mechanism positioned on the second end of the shoulder strap and adapted to being mated to the retaining plate, the ratcheting mechanism for moving the shoulder strap relative to the retaining plate in a predetermined degree of movement.

~~The ratcheting shoulder strap of claim 7~~ wherein the ratcheting mechanism comprises a base plate having an outer retaining ring.

14. A pivoting shoulder strap for a backpack comprising:

a retaining plate positioned in the backpack;

a shoulder strap having a first end and a second end, the first end adapted to being connected to the backpack; and

a pivoting mechanism attached to the second end of the shoulder strap and adapted to being connected to the retaining plate, the pivoting mechanism comprising a base plate and a pivoting plate which is retained within the base plate, the pivoting mechanism for moving the shoulder strap relative to the retaining plate in a predetermined degree of motion.

15. The pivoting shoulder strap of claim 14 wherein the base plate comprises a clip and apertures positioned around the clip, the pivoting plate comprises an aperture adapted to fit within the clip of the base plate, a tongue portion having a tab with the tab for mating with the apertures in the base plate.

16. The pivoting shoulder strap of claim 15 wherein the apertures are positioned at predetermined intervals around the clip.

17. The pivoting shoulder strap of claim 15 wherein the clip further comprises a pair of tabs which are used to retain the pivoting plate.

18. The pivoting shoulder strap of claim 14 wherein the retaining plate comprises a plate having a pair of screw holes each adapted for receiving a screw, with each screw being mated to the pivoting mechanism.

19. The pivoting shoulder strap of claim 14 wherein the pivoting plate comprises a detent having a tab.

20. The pivoting shoulder strap of claim 14 wherein the base plate and the pivoting plate are constructed of high density polypropylene.
